

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 311
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE S311-PCS35231-CN-1

Short Title: Utility Worker Protection Act.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 18, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PUNISHMENT FOR COMMITTING AN ASSAULT
3 AGAINST A UTILITY OR COMMUNICATIONS WORKER.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 14-33(b) reads as rewritten:

6 "(b) Unless ~~his~~the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater
7 punishment, any person who commits any assault, assault and battery, or affray is guilty of a
8 Class 1 misdemeanor if, in the course of the assault, assault and battery, or affray, ~~he~~he or she
9 does any of the following:

10 ...
11 (9) Commits an assault and battery against a sports official when the sports
12 official is discharging or attempting to discharge official duties at a sports
13 event, or immediately after the sports event at which the sports official
14 discharged official duties. A "sports official" is a person at a sports event who
15 enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who
16 supervises the participants, such as a coach. A "sports event" includes any
17 interscholastic or intramural athletic activity in a primary, middle, junior high,
18 or high school, college, or university, any organized athletic activity
19 sponsored by a community, business, or nonprofit organization, any athletic
20 activity that is a professional or semiprofessional event, and any other
21 organized athletic activity in the State.

22 (10) Assaults a utility or communications worker while the worker is (i) readily
23 identifiable as a worker and (ii) discharging or attempting to discharge his or
24 her duties. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "utility or
25 communications worker" means an employee of, agent of, or under contract
26 with an organization, entity, or company, whether State-created or privately,
27 municipally, county, or cooperatively owned, that provides electricity, natural
28 gas, liquid petroleum, water, wastewater, telecommunications services, or
29 internet access services. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "readily
30 identifiable as a worker" shall be construed to include the worker wearing, at
31 the time of the assault, a uniform, hat, or other outerwear bearing the logo of
32 the utility or communications company for which the worker is an employee
33 of, agent of, or under contract with."

34 **SECTION 2.** Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this
35 act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statutes that would be applicable but for this act
36 remain applicable to those prosecutions.



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1 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to offenses
2 committed on or after that date.